THE GREATNESS OF JESUS CHRIST

(What God Did Through His Son)

Hebrews 1:1-3

1-3-2021

Realize how great Jesus Christ really is!

See what God the Father did and is doing in His Son, Jesus Christ. . .

I. God <u>SPOKE to us</u> in His Son (v. 1-2a)

II. God <u>RULES the universe</u> via His Son (v. 2b)

III. God <u>CREATED all things</u> through His Son (v. 2c)

IV. God <u>REVEALED Himself</u> in His Son (v. 3a)

V. God <u>SUSTAINS creation</u> by His Son (v. 3b)

VI. God <u>ATONED FOR SIN</u> through His Son (v. 3c)

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Have you ever had something, but didn't realize the value of it until some time later?

Perhaps its value "hit home" with you when you lost it, or had to get a replacement, or had others take interest in it.

The Hebrew Christians had Jesus Christ but didn't appreciate Him, or have a mature confidence in His all-sufficiency.

Hence, they struggled with assurance of salvation and were tempted to go back under the Old Covenant into dead Judaism.

Hebrews:

Author: God via an unnamed New Testament apostle or prophet; some say Paul, others say Apollos, Barnabas, or Luke. God left the writer unmentioned because this book's purpose is to exalt Jesus Christ and not any human being.

Date: Sometime before the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. (a fair guess - 64-68 A.D.)

Title: Hebrews; An Exhortation to Hebrew (or Jewish) Christians

Purpose: To encourage Jewish Christians to be secure in their relationship to God through the person and work of Jesus Christ

Hebrews is a book of admonishment so as to encourage the Jewish believers not to revert back into Judaism, but to rest confidently in Jesus Christ.

Theme: The Supremacy (preeminence, superiority) of Jesus Christ. Christ is *"better"* than anyone or anything, and His work did that which no man or sacrifice could accomplish; namely: permanently remove the penalty and power of sin.

Realize how great Jesus Christ really is!

See what God the Father did and is doing in His Son, Jesus Christ...

I. God <u>SPOKE to us</u> in His Son (v.1-2a)

V. 1

"Sundry times" - God gave His Old Testament revelation at various time periods. Each bit of revelation would build on the former. "Progressive Revelation."

"Divers manners" - God revealed Himself in different ways.

a. <u>Miracles</u> - the mighty acts of God in history. When God spoke by "<u>event</u> revelation," He always had a messenger to interpret it with "<u>word</u> revelation."

EXAMPLE: the Exodus - Ex. 5:1-2, cp. 7:4-5; Ps. 106:7-9.

b. <u>Theophanies</u> - physical appearance of God to man.

1) <u>Natural</u> theophany (appearances in nature) - Ex. 3 (burning bush)Ex. 13:21-22 (pillar of cloud and fire)

2) <u>Auditory</u> theophany (God's voice could be heard) - Ex. 19:1-3; Lk. 3:22.

3) <u>Bodily</u> theophany (The Angel [Messenger] of the Lord) - a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ - Gen. 16:10; Judges 2:1ff.

c. <u>Urim</u> & <u>Thumim</u> - two precious stones, used like lots, to determine God's will for Israel - Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21; Dt. 33:8).

d. <u>His Word</u>
1) Direct words (Ex. 33:11)
2) Direct writing (Ex. 31:18)
3) Dreams (Dan. 7:1)
4) Visions (Ez. 1:1)
5) <u>Scriptures</u> - the written Word (Ex. 17:14, 24:4, 7; Dt. 31:24; II Tim. 3:16)

"The fathers" - The Jewish patriarchs (Hebrew forefathers)

God had to reveal Himself, because man by nature is unable to discover God (can't see Him or know Him); also because man by the fall is uninterested in discovering God. Because of sin, man hides from God and is dead spiritually.

V. 2

"These last days" - The entire New Testament era is called the Last Days.

The time period between Christ's first coming and His second coming is noted as a period of the "Last Days." With God, a thousand years are as one day.

In accordance with the theme of the superiority of Christ, the writer of Hebrews shows His superiority over the prophets by revealing Christ as the last and final spokesman for God (SEE: Hebrews 2:2-3)

Mohammed was not "the seal of the prophets." Jesus is the final authority.

There were no flaws, errors, or mistakes in Christ's words, because when He spoke God was speaking.

The Red-Letter edition of the Bible draws attention to the exact quotes of Jesus Christ.

Everything Jesus said was God's Word because Jesus is God.

That is why Jesus taught with *"authority, and not as the scribes"* (Mk. 1:22).

If you want to know what God thinks about life, death, human relationships, morals, ethics, priorities, divorce, etc., see what Jesus said about it!

If you want God's way of righteousness, salvation, forgiveness, etc., see what Jesus said about it!

II. God <u>RULES the universe</u> via His Son (v.2b)

"Heir" - the word referred to the one to whom a father would leave his property when he died.

Christ, after His resurrection and exaltation, became the chief owner of all things.

Psalm 24:1 - *"The earth is the Lord's."*

"All things" - not some things.

He is the "firstborn" ruler (preeminent one) because He made everything (Col. 1:15-18).

He who owns all has a right to all.

Everything you own ultimately belongs to Jesus Christ (not just "spiritual things").

Even your body is His (I Cor. 6:19-20).

Jesus rules! And will yet rule! (SEE: Psalm 2)

We are joint-heirs because of our union with Christ (Rom. 8:17).

III. God <u>CREATED all things</u> through His Son (v.2c)

"By whom. . . he made" - Creation was accomplished via (by means of) the Son. God the Father planned creation, but the Son performed it by the power of His Word (Heb. 11:3).

Jesus is Creator:

John 1:3 - "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."

Col. 1:16 - *"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."*

Jesus created everything.

1) All beings and things "in heavens and in earth"
2) All that is material and immaterial
3) All laws, governing authorities and powers

"In Heaven" - Jesus created the angelic realm (the host of angels including Michael and Gabriel; the cherubim and seraphim, etc.)

"In earth" - everything from the Swiss Alps to the Islands of Hawaii; every kind of plant, tree, fruit, vegetable; every animal, fish, reptile and insect. And the crown of His creation - mankind - was made by and for Jesus Christ.

No wonder the elements obeyed His voice; and the demons trembled in His presence and respected Him. He is LORD of all, Creator of all!

It does not matter where it is (location); or what it is (essence); or how it is ("the powers that be") -- Jesus made it all.

The powers that be are ordained of God (Rom. 13:1) particularly of Jesus Christ!

When Jesus became man, He worked as a carpenter. A fitting trade for the one who built the universe, and yet what a humble trade. What humiliation for the Creator who spoke the world into existence to work much of his 33 years on earth using the simple tools of man and the elements of His own creation, to construct with.

It seems that Scripture teaches that every work God did, He did through the instrumentality of His Son.

"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (Jn. 5:17).

"The worlds" - two words: *tous/aionas*. Lit. "the ages."

According to Rabbinical use, the word refers not only to the periods of time, but to the content of the world (Reinecker, p. 664). The word refers to time, space, and the material world.

Jesus not only was involved in the initial creative process of the world (as the word *kosmos* would indicate), but He has also been actively working in this universe through out the ages, as the word *aion* implies.

IV. God REVEALED Himself in His Son (v.3a)

"Brightness" - Radiance, outshining of splendid light.

Christ is the Shekinah Glory of God.

Jesus radiates God's glory. He does not simply reflect it (as the moon reflects the sun), but He radiates it. He is the source of the glorious glow! (cp. Rev. 1).

"He who has seen Me has seen the Father." (Jn. 14:9).

"Express image" - The exact representation, the precise reproduction.

Christ perfectly and completely gives us a visible image of the invisible God.

To see Christ is to see God, because He is the *"image of the invisible God"* (Col. 1:15).

Cp. Col. 2:9 - "For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

Christ in "bodily" form (in a visible form) contains (presently) all of the fullness of deity!

The KJV says: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16).

"Since no mere creature can perfectly reveal God, Jesus Christ must be God" (Wiersbe, p. 49).

V. God SUSTAINS creation by His Son (v.3b)

cp. Col 1:17 - "Consist" ("sunistami") - lit. to stand together; to hold together; to cohere.

Jesus is the "principle of cohesion in the universe" (Lightfoot).

Jesus Christ Himself is the "unifying band which encompasses everything and holds it together" (Lohse).

"A guide took a group of people through an atomic laboratory and explained how matter was composed of rapidly moving electric particles. The tourists studied models of molecules and were amazed to learn that matter is made up primarily of space. During the question period, one visitor asked, "If this is the way matter works, what holds it all together?" For that, the guide had no answer." (Wiersbe, p. 50).

- Who keeps the planets each in place? -- Jesus
- Who keeps the orbit of the earth around the sun consistent? -- Jesus
- Who keeps the seasons (of spring, summer, winter, and fall) regular? -- Jesus
- Who keeps the Laws that govern life on earth (EX: gravity, etc.) in tact? -- Jesus
- Who keeps nations from becoming totally unglued and civilizations from destroying each other? -- Jesus
- Who, then, will interrupt the present order of all things in the Day of the LORD? (Rev. 5:12-17; 15-17) -- Jesus!
- Who alone can keep your life and family from erupting and exploding and becoming unglued? -- Jesus!

"Upholding" - to sustain and carry. The word describes not only support but movement. Christ holds all of creation up, but also is moving it in the direction He has sovereignly decreed. Everything is moving right on course.

How does Christ sustain creation? By His spoke Word (*rhemati*), which has strength and authority by His sovereign power (*dunamis*).

VI. God <u>ATONED FOR SIN</u> through His Son (v.3c)

"By Himself" - (middle voice) No one helps Jesus purge us. Not angels, "saints," man's works, etc.

"Purged" = cleansed and purified. To wash away by cleaning.

Christ's sacrificial death at Calvary did the cleansing work.

(SEE: Heb. 9:26, 28; 10:10-14).

"What can wash away my sins?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus!"

"Sat down" - Because the work of salvation is done, finished, over.

"Right hand" - A place of power and honor (no one else in the universe has this right! Jesus is greatly supreme!)

Conclusion: